

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-34, which were all of the then pending claims, under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,563,515 (Reynolds, et al.) in view of U.S. Patent 6,564,378 (Satterfield, et al.). The Examiner also objected to the specification and to the drawings.

With regard to the specification, the Examiner asked that the serial numbers be provided for the cross-referenced applications listed on page 1 of the application. The Examiner further objected to the specification as not explicitly pointing out the claimed limitation "generating a display, on a computer display screen, of a tree having a plurality of nodes and branches interconnecting the nodes; and embedding in the nodes information about the video-on-demand services." The Examiner also objected to the drawings as not showing this claimed feature.

Applicants are herein amending independent Claims 1, 6, 11, 18, 25 and 29 to better define the subject matters of these claims. Claims 35 and 36, which are dependent from Claim 18, are being added to describe details of one embodiment of the invention, and Claims 3 and 8 are being cancelled to reduce the number of issues in this case. Also, the specification is being amended to add the requested serial numbers.

It is believed that the above-mentioned amendments fully address the Examiner's objections to the specification and the drawings. More specifically, it is noted that the above-quoted claim limitation is being amended to delete the reference to the branches interconnecting the nodes. The remainder of this claim limitation is expressly pointed out in, for instance, the paragraph bridging pages 4 and 5 of the specification. Examples of the tree and the tree nodes referred to in this claim limitation are discussed from page 6,

line 6 to page 7, line 10 of the specification, and as explained thereat, Figures 1A and 1B illustrates tree formations and displays.

In view of the above-discussion, it is believed that the specification provides the proper support for all the claim limitations, and that all of the claim limitations are appropriately shown in the drawings. The Examiner is thus respectfully asked to reconsider and to withdraw the objections to the specification and the drawings.

In addition, the pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art because that prior art fails to disclose or suggest the feature of embedding in a tree or matrix display information about services provided to each of a multitude of customers by a video-on-demand service provider, as described in independent Claims 1, 6, 11, 18, 28 and 29.

To elaborate, the instant invention relates to procedures for monitoring or representing aspects of video-on-demand services. In a first aspect, a tree representation is used to represent and monitor features of the video-on-demand system. Preferably, this aspect of the invention provides multilevel information about the video-on-demand system. A display showing a tree having a plurality of nodes may be generated, and information about video-on-demand services is embedded in these nodes. For example, the nodes may be embedded with information about the equipment used to provide the video-on-demand services, the users, or the video-on-demand programs themselves.

In accordance with a second aspect of the present invention, a matrix is established from a pair of catalogs of elements of a video-on-demand system. Connection representations are formed for at least some of the cells of the matrix. These connection representations may be used to represent a range of relationships. For

example, these connections may be used to show relationships between users and presentations, or between the video-on-demand equipment.

Reynolds, et al. and Satterfield, et al. show various types of television program guides.

In particular, Reynolds, et al. discloses a television program guide that supports a video window function that may be used when browsing for available television programs. A viewer may use the program guide to display a window that contains video for a program currently being broadcast on another channel or a video clip of a program to be shown in the future. The viewer may learn about available programming by browsing through channels on the program guide. Columns 11 and 12 of Reynolds, et al. describes a browser feature for programming that may be available on demand.

Satterfield, et al. describes an interactive television program guide that may be used to show a browsing display screen. This browsing display screen includes a list of current programs, and a video window that shows a television program that the user is currently watching. An important feature of the Satterfield, et al. system is that the user can look at information about several programs without changing the program being shown in the video window.

It is important to note that there is a very important general difference between the present invention and the methods and systems disclosed in Satterfield, et al., and Reynolds, et al. This difference is that the instant invention is directed to showing information about relationships between a video on demand service provider and a multitude of customers; while the above-discussed prior art is directed more toward television programming guides that are viewed by individual customers.

This general difference between the present invention and the prior art is reflected in a number of more specific differences between this invention and the prior art. For example, with the present invention, the tree nodes or matrices are used to represent or show information about the video-on-demand services provided to a multitude of customers, not just one customer.

Independent Claims 1, 6, 11, 18, 25 and 29 clearly describe this difference. In particular, Claim 1 is herein being amended to describe the feature that information is embedded in the nodes of the tree about the video-on-demand services provided to the multitude of customers of the video-on demand service. Similarly, Claims 6, 11, 18, 25 and 29 are being amended to indicate that the tree nodes or matrices referred to in the claims are used to show or represent services provided to the multitude of customers of the video-on-demand service.

The other references of record have been reviewed, and it is believed that these other references, whether considered individually or in combination, are no more pertinent than Satterfield, et al, and Reynolds, et al. For example, Rowe, et al. also discloses a video programming guide. This guide allows a user to view information by genre groupings rather than by a time-based schedule. This reference, like Reynolds, et al. and Satterfield, et al. does not suggest any way to show information about the complete set of services being provided by a video-on-demand system.

Because of the above-discussed differences between Claims 1, 6, 11, 18, 25 and 29 and the prior art, and because of the advantages associated with those differences, Claims 1, 6, 11, 18, 25 and 29 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. Claims 2, 4, 5 and 34 are dependent from Claim 1 and are allowable therewith; Claims 7,

9 and 10 are dependent from Claim 6 and are allowable therewith; and Claims 12-16 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claim 11.

Further, Claims 19-23, 35 and 36 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claim 18; Claims 26-28 are dependent from Claim 25 and are allowable therewith; and Claim 30 is dependent from, and is allowable with, Claim 29. Also, Claims 17, 24 and 31 incorporate by reference, and are allowable with, Claims 1, 18 and 30 respectively. Claims 31-33 are dependent from Claim 30 and are allowable therewith.

The Examiner is thus respectfully requested to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4-7 and 9-34 under 35 U.S.C. §103, and to allow Claims these claims and new Claims 35 and 36.

For the reasons discussed above, the Examiner is asked to reconsider and to withdraw the objections to the specification and to the drawings. The Examiner is also requested to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4-7 and 9-34 under 35 U.S.C. 103, and to allow these claims and new Claims 35 and 36. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' Attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is asked to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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